

Minutes of the East Greenwich School Committee

Tuesday, January 10, 2017

Archie R. Cole Middle School Library

100 Cedar Avenue

East Greenwich, RI 02818

6:00 p.m. Executive Session, Mrs. Winters made a motion at 6:08 p.m. to go into executive session for discussion and/or action regarding those items of business exempt from open meetings under Rhode Island General Laws §42-46-4 and §42-46-5 (a) (2) Teacher Negotiations. Mr. Fain seconded the motion, which passed 7-0.

Those in attendance were Ms. Carolyn Mark, Chair; Mrs. Mary Ellen Winters, Vice-Chair; Mr. Matt Plain; Mr. Michael Fain; Mr. Jeff Dronzek; Dr. Lori McEwen; and Dr. Yan Sun. Dr. Victor Mercurio, Superintendent; Mrs. Gail Wilcox, Director of Administration; Mr. Bradley Wilson, Director of Student Services; and Attorney Matthew Oliverio were also in attendance.

7:00 p.m. Regular Meeting

I. Call to Order

Ms. Mark called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

III. Public Comments

Ms. Korie Roberts, 355 Stone Ridge Drive, asked the Committee to

continue the later start times for middle and high school students.

Ms. Kate Goldman, 200 Kenyon Avenue, read a statement asking the Committee to find a solution to maintain the new start times and eventually move towards an 8:30 a.m. start time for middle and high school students.

Ms. Lisa Davis, 60 Sylvan Drive, described the huge difference later start times have had on her family.

Ms. Susan Ramsey, 1394 Frenchtown Road, also urged the Committee to keep the later start times.

Dr. Rose Miner, 63 Cindy Ann Drive, described the positive experience her children had in East Greenwich. She asked the Committee to look at better pay/benefits for the teachers and noted the value their impact has on students.

IV. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular and executive for December 20, 2016

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Dronzek, the Committee voted 7-0 to approve the regular and executive minutes.

V. Superintendent's Report

a. Incident Overview

Dr. Mercurio thanked Mr. Giusti and the entire faculty/staff at Eldredge for their

outstanding efforts during last week's incident. Protocols are being reviewed across all schools. The Alert Now system and list serv systems are also being reviewed. Ms. Mark asked what the protocol is for discussing the incident with the public. Dr. Mercurio said the investigation is ongoing and therefore he cannot comment at this point.

b. RIDE Leadership Mini Grant

Cole received a \$9,600 grant from RIDE/RIASP. This grant is to support teacher leadership.

VI. Action Items

a. Resignation: Jenna Evans, Occupational Therapist, Eldredge and Frenchtown

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Fain, the Committee voted

7-0 to accept the resignation.

b. Approval of Field Trip- Cole-Grade 8-Close Up Trip-Washington, D.C.-Sunday,

May 28, 2017- Wednesday, May 31, 2017

Ms. Mark noted the current Field Trip Policy is still in effect. She asked Mr. Seger to explain financial aid and sponsorship for those students in need. Mr. Seger said 110 grade eight students (out of 232) have already registered. The cost per student is \$1,407. Mr. Seger explained how Close Up provides a \$40 credit per registered student. That \$40 could be used for students needing financial assistance. Families are asked to pay a \$400 deposit and then financial aid can be requested for the balance (through Close Up).

Mr. Plain asked several questions regarding financial aid, how absences are coded, instructional minutes, program ties to the curriculum, make-up work, chaperones, and accommodations. Mr. Seger explained that students would be absent for two days and those days are considered excused absences. Mr. Seger said he considers those two days “instructional minutes.” Mr. Seger also explained how the trip ties into the American history piece in the curriculum. Missed schoolwork is to be completed. The ratio of chaperones will be 10 students to 1 adult. All chaperones will be staff members except for Officer Burt Montalban. There is no cost for the chaperones as a credit is given for every ten students who sign up. Mr. Seger said financial aid is discussed during the parent information session and also in the subsequent list serv message to parents.

Mr. Seger said he would work with Close Up if there were a shortfall in funding for students in need. Mr. Seger said student supports would be in place for students needing accommodations through their individual plan or any other need that arises. Dr. McEwen

asked about the 122 students who are not going on the trip. She asked if they would have similar rich opportunities as those traveling. She also asked why these students aren’t going on the trip and would like an account of why students do not go on the trip.

Mr. Seger said a new curriculum is in play and he echoes Dr. McEwen’s sentiment about giving those students opportunities back at school. He said the reasoning varies as to why students chose not to go. On a motion by Mr. Fain, which was seconded by Mrs.

Winters, the Committee voted 6-1 to approve the trip. Mr. Plain voted against the trip.

c. Approval of the EGHS Program of Studies 2017-18

Mr. Podraza answered several clarifying questions from the Committee. On a motion by Dr. McEwen, which was seconded by Mr. Dronzek, the Committee voted 7-0 to approve the Program of Studies 2017-18.

d. Approval of Finance Committee Community Members

1. Ms. Heather Larkin

2. Mr. David Gecawich

Mr. Dronzek noted one additional submission was received. It was from Stuart Peterson, former School Committee member and Finance Committee Chair. He would like to revise the Charge to change the total number of community members and add Mr. Peterson. On a motion by Mr. Plain, which was seconded by Mrs. Winters, the Committee voted 7-0 to approve Ms. Larkin and Mr. Gecawich.

VII. Advisory/Subcommittee Updates

a. Mental Health Subcommittee

Ms. Mark provided an overview of yesterday's meeting. Mr. Podraza attended and gave a presentation on how school climate and culture are measured at the EGHS and as a whole. The group discussed Survey Works, which will be given to EGHS students in February and discussed how to improve culture and climate.

b. Building Committee

Mr. Fain highlighted the January 4th meeting with representatives from RIDE. This meeting was to discuss the Stage 2 submission,

which is due February 1st.

c. Transportation Subcommittee

The meeting on January 4th was cancelled due to the incident at Eldredge. Mr. Dronzek

complimented Dr. Mercurio and the EG police for their quick response. The meeting has not been rescheduled. The bus bid is scheduled to go out tomorrow.

VIII. Discussion

a. Teaching and Learning: Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)

Dr. Mercurio gave an overview of the Next Generation Science Standards. The Three Dimensions of the NSGG will be posted on this week's field memo. Dr. Mercurio would like to invite practitioners to a future meeting to discuss how the NGSS affects teaching.

Since there is a department chair for Science for grades 6-12, Dr. McEwen asked how K-5 teachers are engaged and what types of professional development (PD) are taking place. Dr. Mercurio said building administrators handle K-5. Teachers share vertically and horizontally. He also added there is not nearly enough PD and the district continues to look for ways to support practice.

b. FY2018 Budget

This item will be a standing item on each agenda until the budget adoption. A timetable for meetings with budget owners and the town have been set. Budget owners are working on their budgets. The district has met for the second time with the town to discuss the FY2018 budget. Fund balance, challenges, and opportunities were

discussed.

c. Status Update of Revenue Opportunities

1. Fields

2. Advertising

Dr. Mercurio gave an overview of potential revenue opportunities, which include advertising and charging for field usage. In July 2016, a policy was drafted for advertising and acknowledgement of donations. This policy is still in process. Dr. Mercurio discussed possible opportunities for revenues, but explained the town needs to be involved in areas that involve the fields/land trust. The Fields' Committee will need to be involved, along with Mr. Cobain, town officials, and others with leadership roles in local athletics. Ms. Mark would like the Finance Committee to investigate revenue opportunities.

IX. School Committee Concerns/Important Matters Pending

Dr. McEwen would like a presentation on curriculum to discuss various areas (i.e., curriculum advancement, changes, etc.). Ms. Mark said the budget workshops might be a good time to discuss with building principals. Any other questions can be discussed at a future meeting if necessary.

X. Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Fain, the Committee voted 7-0 to adjourn at 8:32 p.m.

CHRISTINE DIMEGLIO

SECRETARY